

Tensions of Europe

RESEARCH NETWORK ON HISTORY,
TECHNOLOGY AND EUROPE

ToE Newsletter June 2020

EDITO

In the previous editorial, I was more than pleased to announce our next 10th ToE Conference in Aarhus. Since then, a pandemic has hit the world, with Europe being the most severely affected continent to date, albeit unevenly across countries and regions. In this very special context, I hope that each of you and your loved ones are in the best shape, and ready to face the multiple uncertainties and challenges that lie ahead of us.

When it comes to our next conference, the members of the management committee, in agreement with the organizer, have decided to postpone it until June 2022. However, on the dates initially set (30 June, 1, 2 July 2021), we will organise instead a series of smaller online events to allow members of the network to meet, share and debate. In the coming months, we will get in touch and ask for your ideas and initiatives in order to build an exciting program.

Of course, interacting through the screens won't replace the pleasure of conversing in person. This is something that we experienced firsthand during the lockdown. As we spent so much time online, as we saw the past itself being reduced to its digitized part—fortunately in constant increase—I must say that I found it refreshing (and distracting for the kids) to go scratching a bit the surface of the backyard of my building in Paris. Many more remnants of the past came up than I had expected, from an early 17th century coin, and a few small bones to a keychain from a nearby car garage, a strap adjuster buckle and a lot of nails! A multitude of artifacts that obviously speak to historians of technology. All of a sudden, the world outside our shrinking lives became present again, tangible. This materialized the power of history to transport us through time and space. A breathing.

See you soon, online most probably, with a lot more new histories of technology to share.

Léonard Laborie (CNRS, UMR Sirice, Paris), chair of Tensions of Europe's management committee (2019-2021)

Please contact us if you want to share information in the next edition of the Newsletter, at [tensionsofeurope\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:tensionsofeurope[at]gmail.com).



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Coping with COVID-19

News from ICOHTEC Eindhoven and SHOT New Orleans

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 47th Annual ICOHTEC Symposium will take place in digital form, while the SHOT Annual Meeting has been postponed for one year.

The [ICOHTEC 2020 Symposium](#) will take place virtually from Wednesday 15 until Friday 17 July 2020. The program will offer an innovative mix of traditional and new session formats, plenary sessions, round tables, and social events. The conference is organized by ICOHTEC, the Foundation for the History of Technology and Eindhoven University of Technology. The conference addresses the theme 'A History of Technology for an Age of Crisis'.

Interested in listening in? From June 26 onwards Tensions of Europe scholars can register as attendees for the symposium for the reduced fee of €15 (the regular attendee fee is €25). You can find all information on the conference [website](#).

SHOT Annual Meeting is unable to join in New Orleans in 2020. In collaboration with the Program Committee and HSS, SHOT is exploring options for virtual panels in October 2020. Relevant information will be posted on the SHOT [website](#). SHOT and HSS now plan to meet jointly in New Orleans, in November 2021.

Food for thought!

Here is a sample of history of technology related resources put online in the context of the pandemic crisis. As we are collecting such resources to be added on the website, please [send us](#) your contributions.

> Open access to [Technology and Culture](#) on Project Muse.

Message from SHOT secretariat: The entire run of T&C is temporarily now open-access on Project Muse, along with other JHUP content. However, please note the following. Such "free" access has a downside. Whenever anyone accesses T&C through the normal channels of Project Muse, SHOT gets a small amount of revenue, which adds up to a very useful boost for our annual budget. The temporary "free" access doesn't pay SHOT anything. Accordingly, you (and your colleagues and your students) can give SHOT a lift at no cost to yourself, by continuing to access T&C through Project MUSE via the website of your university library. Only usage from institutions that have a Project Muse subscription are taken into account for computing SHOT revenues. Please help SHOT by continuing to use those institutional access points.

> [Blog entry](#) on "The Making and Breaking of Europe: Implications of the COVID-19 Crisis", by Johan Schot, editor the Making Europe book series and co-author of Writing the Rules for Europe. Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations, together with Wolfram Kaiser. This entry is part of a larger effort to showcase the Making Europe series, coming out of Tensions of Europe first phase of development (see below).

> SHOT: *Technology's Storytellers: COVID-19 Edition*, [YouTube videos](#)

ToE Network: looking forward

Tensions of Europe Early Career Scholars' Group. Call for Initiative - Organizers

This age of trouble brings to us a lot of uncertainties and is especially pressing for early career scholars. The ToE Early Career Scholars' Group therefore wants to open up a forum for discussions and support for those of us in such positions. We also want to initiate a discussion about the role of the Early career scholars' group in the future.

We would therefore like to invite emerging researchers of history of technology and related disciplines to participate in co-organizing a virtual workshop as well as propose fresh ideas about the topics, format, and contents of such an event to be held in the fall 2020. The aim of the event will be to discuss current research as well as career and funding opportunities in the history of technologies and related disciplines. It will also be an informal space to share specific thoughts and ideas around the COVID-situation as well as discussing the future of the group. New members who are interested in organising the workshop will work together with the current core cohort of the group and in cooperation with established scholars in the field.

The [Tensions of Europe Early Career Scholars' Group](#) is a self-organizing network gathering PhD-students, post-doctoral scholars and non-tenured academics within Tensions of Europe formed in 2014. We facilitate and encourage community-building among early career scholars across borders. We provide an informal, open space for discussing research ideas and career development. Our main tool for doing so are regular meetings that take place both face-to-face and online, enabling participation for those who do not have the financial and/or practical opportunity to travel to

meetings.

If you want to get an experience of organizing academic events and see "the kitchen" with your own eyes, communicate with many peer and established scholars in the field, and discuss future career and funding opportunities, please, **send an e-mail with an expression of interest by 30 August 2020** to [Elena Kochetkova](#). Please state: 1) whether you are interested in helping organising this event, 2) what topics of discussion you would like to see at the event.

[Read more](#)

ToE Management Committee

Nina Wormbs (KTH, Sweden) decided to step back from the management committee in March 2020, where she has served since 2013 and chaired in 2015-2017. Members of the management committee warmly thank her for her invaluable commitment to the network. The management committee is happy to welcome its new member, Prof. Per Lundin, Head of the Division of Science, Technology and Society, at Chalmers University of Technology (Gothenburg, Sweden), who will bring his expertise in many fields of interest to ToE.

[Read more](#)

ToE and Teaching

Many members of the Tensions of Europe (ToE) research network are involved in programs of study (undergraduate, graduate, doctoral) that offer a range of courses that benefit from ToE research (and vice versa). In effect, Tensions of Europe is, also, a unique teaching network on history, technology and Europe. We are currently collecting (and are going to upload) information on Resources, Programs and Courses available through/around ToE (for more information on the teaching initiatives of the ToE network, contact [Aristotle Tympas](#), and send information to be shared on the ToE website).

[Read more](#)

ToE Umbrella research program "Technology and Societal Challenges ca 1800-2050"

The explorative phase of this program (2016-2019) was concluded with the publication of a number of research agendas in a dedicated *Technology and Culture* Forum. [Click here](#) for the open access articles.

Ongoing initiatives:

- The ToE management committee decided to keep the explorative phase's umbrella structure—thematic transnational working groups building research networks and a research agenda's—operational. This means that (a) **existing working groups**, which so far have organized over two dozen workshops, made a number of successful grant proposals, and prepared a number of publications (see last newsletter), continue to do this work in a bottom-up fashion. And (b) that interested colleagues are still welcome to **start new explorative thematic networks**, or link existing ones to the ToE initiative (ToE, after all, aims to function as a *research hub*). Please contact [Erik van der Vleuten](#) if you're interested in this.

CURRENT WORKING GROUPS



- We are also further **spreading the research agenda**, which has only become more relevant and urgent after the COVID crisis. One major initiative is the organization of the **ICOHTEC 2020 Annual Congress on "A history of technology for an age of crisis"**. The physical meeting in Eindhoven has been replaced by a digital conference format (see, also, above).
- Initiating a research phase: several applications for research funding are under way, mostly initiated in the context of the thematic research networks.
- The Foundation SHT is exploring the viability of organizing a common overall product (comparing to the Making Europe book series in the previous umbrella program on technology and European integration).

[Read more](#)

10th ToE Conference, Aarhus, June-July 2022. Technology, environment and resources

As stated in the edito, the next 10th ToE Conference is postponed to the end of June-beginning of July 2022, in Aarhus (Denmark). With Matthias Heymann as its main organizer, it will have as its theme the history of interactions between technology, environment and resources. Technology has been a major factor in using, shaping and understanding environments, processes, which the 7th Tensions of Europe Conference 2015 in Stockholm already analysed. This conference will continue and deepen this thread paying particular attention to histories of natural resources -comprising water, metals, minerals and energy along with living resources such as fisheries, forests and agricultural products. Most of technological, social and environmental changes in history, as well as the way of understanding and making sense of these changes, relate to natural resources in diverse and intricate ways. A "Call for papers" will be issued next year.

[Read more](#)

Making Europe Podcast Series

The Making Europe podcast series challenges our understanding of modern European history. Discover the Making Europe book authors' personal experiences and interests, and let them reveal alternative, unheard of and accessible stories from the history of technology that shaped Europe.

Communicating Europe: In this podcast Andreas Fickers reflects on the transformation of the radio as a communication space in Europe.

Writing the Rules for Europe: Johan Schot shares, among others, the story of Englebert Hondelink, a technical expert who contributed to restoring peace in Europe after the Second World War.

Europe's Infrastructure Transition: In this Podcast book Per Högselius, Erik van der Vleuten and Arne Kaijser tell the story of the Nordstream natural gas pipeline and illustrate how transnational infrastructure projects are utilized as symbols of peace and friendly cooperation across continents.

Building Europe on Expertise: Martin Kohlrausch and Helmuth Trischler introduce a story of experts (un)making Europe that has fascinated them. It is the devastating story of Europe's attempt to launch a rocket into space as the third nation behind the Soviet Union and the US.

Consumers, Tinkerers, Rebels: Ruth Oldenziel unravels what a British chief banking clerk and a French chief justice had in common when they travelled first class through mid-nineteenth-century Europe. Mikael Hård discusses why consumers, tinkerers and rebels are so relevant when discussing the making of Europe.

[Read more](#)

Please update your individual page on the ToE website

The information we share on the website is valuable if it is updated, for example, with the latest relevant publications. You can update your personal profile by logging in the ToE website. This [page](#) might serve as a model.

[Read more](#)

Ongoing projects in/on History, Technology and Europe

Tensions of Europe research network on Sustainable Urban Mobility

On April 21st the Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) group celebrated: we met on-line on Zoom to raise our glasses to the publication of our joint book [A U-Turn to the Future: Sustainable Urban Mobility since 1850](#) (New York: Berghahn Books, 2020). What began after a kick-off meeting in Caserta, Italy at the annual conference of the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility in September 2015 has now resulted in a tangible paper trail. The book is organized in three sections investigating three interconnected research questions. First, how has car-centred planning taken hold of cities in the mass-motorized world, despite resistance against it from the beginning? Second, how can we recover more sustainable alternatives that continued to exist next to automobility and that have thus far remained rather invisible in history (such as walking or cycling)? Third, what opportunities and threats do persistence and path dependencies present to make a U-turn to the low-carbon mobilities from the past feasible as part of more sustainable urban mobility in the future? The [open-access introduction](#) to the book discusses these questions, which have also inspired our [contribution to the collaborative Tensions of Europe publication](#) that appeared in the January 2020 Technology and Culture issue in the form of a Forum on 'History and Technology in an Age of Grand Challenges.'

Pedestrianism surfaced out of the book as an important, yet neglected, theme in mobility history and part of what we call a useable past as part of the mixture of solutions to the grand challenge to make urban mobility more sustainable today. As an outgrowth of our collaboration the journal *Urban History* published a [special issue](#) on historical perspectives on pedestrians and the city, on-line, in November 2019, with contributions by SUM group members [Colin Pooley](#), [Martin Emanuel](#), [Tiina Männistö-Funk](#) and [Peter Norton](#). Moreover, Martin Emanuel and Daniel Normark secured funding for the project "Techno-Politics of Walking: Continuity and Change of Streets as Public Space in Urban Europe" from Formas, the Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development. After the active contribution of several SUM group members to give cycling history a boost, it is an exciting prospect to us that something similar may now be happening for pedestrian history in addition to our ongoing other research efforts as part of Tensions of Europe's developing 2nd Flagship Research Program on Technology and Societal Challenges, ca.1800-2050.

[Read more](#)

Research Group on Technologies, Environment and Resources

The Tensions of Europe Research Group on Technology, Environment and Resources plans to organize another workshop funded by the [EURES project](#), "Coproduction of Territories and their Resources: Technologies of Prospecting, Extraction and Remediation in History" to be hosted by the National Research University Higher School of Economics - St. Petersburg, Russia, on 10-12 December 2020. This workshop had to be postponed from April this year and also the new date depends on the situation of the current pandemic and may have to be postponed again. A final decision will be taken in autumn. For further information please contact [Julia Lajus](#) or [Elena Kochetkova](#).

The Research Group has also been active in pursuing collaborative publications projects. Recently two special issues have been published and a third one is due to appear soon (see publications below). The Research Group has also been involved in the Focus Section in the journal *Technology and Culture*. In addition, we would like to inform about a review paper recently published by Per Högselius.

Special Issues:

- Anna Åberg and Frank Veraart, [Creating, Capturing and Circulating Commodities: The technology and politics of material resource flows, from the 19th century to the present](#), Special section in *The Extractive Industries and Society* 7:1 (2020), 1-67.

- Ole Sparenberg and Matthias Heymann, [Resource challenges and constructions of scarcity in the 19th and 20th centuries](#), Special Issue in *European Review of History* 27:1-2 (2020), 243-369.

- John Martin and Christian Kehrt, *Reconfiguring Nature, the Environment, Resource Security and the Limits of Expert Knowledge*, Special issue forthcoming in *Global Environment*.

Selected overview papers:

- Matthias Heymann, Per Högselius, Elena Kochetkova, John Martin, Ole Sparenberg, Frank Veraart, Anna Åberg, [Challenging Europe: Technology, Environment, and the Quest for Resource Security](#), *Technology and Culture* 61:1 (2020), 282-294.

- Per Högselius, [The Historical dynamics of resource frontiers](#), *NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin* 28:2 (2020), 253-266.

[Read more](#)

InsSciDE's newsletter - Inventing a shared Science Diplomacy for Europe

H2020 project Inventing a shared science diplomacy for Europe is delighted to share with you the third issue of its newsletter, featuring the latest on the project, a brief historical reflection on the COVID-19 pandemic, and a presentation of its Warsaw Science Diplomacy School (22-26 June 2020).

[Read more](#)

RISK CHANGE: Call for participation

The Athens group of the EU Creative Europe RISK CHANGE project, which focuses on the technology-borders-migration relationship, is planning on organizing a seminar/webinar on the pandemic-migration/borders-technology relationship. ToE members who would be interested in delivering a lecture may contact [Aristotle Tympas](#) until the end of August.

[Read more](#)

Conferences/Meetings

4th Cycling Research Board Annual Meeting "The Future, Past & Present, and Scale of Cycling"

The Cycling Research Board (CRB) holds an [annual meeting](#) to share and discuss academic research on cycling. This year's meeting, organized by Eindhoven University of Technology (26-28 October 2020), is being paired with a Dutch cycling policy conference on Smart Cycling Futures. The CRB Annual Meeting actively seeks to bring together a broad range of researchers, from social scientists to engineers, historians and philosophers interested to better understand, and plan for the role of cycling in the present, past and future. The 4th Annual Meeting of the Cycling Research Board is interesting to the Tensions of Europe community because it explicitly explores the temporality of the future, past & present of cycling, next to issues of scale and the layered geography of cycling.

The Future, Past & Present of Cycling

What explains the current variation in cycling levels? Geographic features (e.g. flatness of terrain, urban form) do not correspond one-on-one with cycling levels. The path dependencies associated with institutional enthusiasm for cycling and its alternatives (particularly public transit) help explain the policy and financial support (or lack thereof) for cycling. Cycling culture comes into play, as does the present of a vociferous social movement fighting for the right to the street and demanding traffic safety for all, particularly children. Together these factors help understand current cycling and the opportunities and threats for future upscaling.

Deadline: July 1, 2020

[Read more](#)

Jobs/Grants

Research Assistant (PostDoc) position at TU Berlin (5 years)

[Research Assistant \(PostDoc\)](#) - salary grade E13 TV-L Berliner Hochschulen - 2nd qualification period (Habilitation). Fakultät I - Institut für Philosophie, Literatur,

Wissenschafts- und Technikgeschichte / FG Technikgeschichte Reference number: I-291/20 (starting at 01/10/20 / for max. 5 years / part-time employment may be possible).

Working field: Cooperation in the organisation, preparation and implementation of teaching and research in the “history of technology” department; participation in academic self-administration; Teaching according to LVVO; Commitment to the further strategic development of the “history of technology” department, its research projects and activities; Scientific qualification towards a “Habilitation”, with a research project which supplements the department’s key topics in a reasonable way; A focus of your interests and expertise in the history of digitization or in environmental history (e.g. pollution legacies) is desirable.

Inquiries concerning the position may be directed to Prof. Dr. [Heike Weber](#).

Deadline for applications is July 3, 2020.

[Read more](#)

Call for grant applications: Constructive Advanced Thinking

Incubated in the Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study (NETIAS) in 2019 and supported by 11 Institutes for Advanced Study, the Constructive Advanced Thinking (CAT) initiative aims to foster networks of excellent early-career researchers dedicated to devise new ideas to understand and to tackle current or emerging societal challenges. Although the program has a strong focus on the societal relevance of the projects, it is entirely blue-sky, bottom-up and non-thematic. CAT encourages a collaboration with stakeholders outside academia (industry, policymakers, NGOs...) who are willing to support or engage in innovative research initiatives. With few guidelines and a very light application process, CAT is designed to maximize the creativity of groups. The collaboration between different institutes in different countries aims at giving these groups access to a great variety of high-level thinkers and researchers to go beyond the current frontiers of knowledge and to develop highly innovative ideas on how to deal with very complex societal issues.

Deadline for applications is September 1, 2020.

[Read more](#)

Other News

Statement from T&C editorial board

Technology and Culture (T&C) is looking for partners in globalizing its scope! As you may know, T&C, is a leading scholarly journal in the history of technology. The publication has a much wider remit—it welcomes approaches from many different disciplines. The current editorial team, based in Eindhoven, seeks to broaden the journal by encouraging submissions, reviews, and ideas from scholars located outside the United States. In its effort to draw on the knowledge of scholars in other places, the journal welcome submissions of research articles that go beyond the nation state, are comparative, and place their case studies in a global context. Similarly, the editors seek submissions that go beyond the single technology to discuss broader themes.

The current editorial team is also working on broadening the journal’s book reviews to include books published in languages other than English and in disciplines other than history. The journal welcomes suggestions for books to review as well as approaches from individuals interested in reviewing singular books or several books on a theme—please, contact the team about the books you think need reviewing.

Please contact the [managing editor](#).

Request from Joel Tarr on kerosene street lamps in European cities

Joel Tarr has recently written an article on off-networked gasoline and naphtha street lamps in the US (Joel A. Tarr (2020): Illuminating the streets, alleys, parks and suburbs of the American City: non-networked technologies, 1870-1920, *History and Technology*. DOI:10.1080/07341512.2020.1739816). He would appreciate any information you might be able to supply about the use of petroleum hydrocarbons in European cities for non-networked public lighting purposes. His thesis is that there has been an over-emphasis on the shift in the networked city from manufactured gas to electricity without consideration of interim off-networked technologies. Please contact him by [email](#).

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